

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claim 3, add claims 9-12, and amend claims 1 and 7, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A contents processing apparatus comprising:
  - a contents information storage that stores a plurality of contents packages, a contents management file for managing respective licenses for the plurality of contents packages, plug-in modules including executable operative functions for processing contents packages, and a plug-in management file for defining the executable operative functions of the plug-in modules among a plurality of functions of respective plug-in modules, wherein the contents management file includes limit information for controlling the use of the respective contents packages based on the respective licenses, and the plug-in management file includes limit information for controlling the use of the respective plug-in modules;
  - a plug-in setting device that installs plug-in modules for processing a contents package;
  - an operation recognition device that identifies permitted operations related to the processing of the contents package from the contents management file corresponding to the contents package;
  - an execution instructing device that provides an instruction for processing the contents package;
  - a plug-in function permission device that permits use of plug-in modules corresponding to the permitted operations identified by said operation recognition device, among functions of the plug-in modules installed by said plug-in setting device for processing the contents package based on the limit information for the respective plug-in modules; and
  - a contents processing execution device that processes the contents package, according to

the executable operative functions of the plug-in modules permitted by said plug-in function permission device, wherein the contents processing apparatus is coupled to an external apparatus via a communication network, and the contents management file is obtained from the external apparatus via the communication network.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) A contents processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the contents management file is rewritable and is obtained independently of the contents packages corresponding thereto.

5. (Previously Presented) A contents processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the plug-in management file is rewritable and is obtained independently of the contents packages corresponding thereto.

6. (Previously Presented) A contents processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a contents package is inhibited from being used when there is no contents management file corresponding to the contents package, and are also inhibited from being processed when there is no plug-in management file corresponding to the contents package.

7. (Currently Amended) A storage medium having encoded thereon a contents processing program including instructions, which when executed by a contents processing apparatus including a contents information storage that stores a plurality of contents packages, a contents management file for managing respective licenses for the plurality of contents packages, plug-in modules including executable operative functions for processing contents packages, and a plug-in management file for defining the executable operative functions of the plug-in modules among

a plurality of functions of respective plug-in modules, wherein the contents management file includes limit information for controlling the use of the respective contents packages based on the respective licenses, and the plug-in management file includes limit information for controlling the use of the respective plug-in modules, causes:

installing, by a plug-in setting module, plug-in modules for processing a contents package;

identifying, by an operation recognition module, permitted operations related to the processing of the contents package from the contents management file corresponding to the contents package, wherein the contents management file is obtained from an external source via a communication network;

providing an instruction for processing the contents package;

permitting, by a plug-in function permission module, use of plug-in modules corresponding to the permitted operations identified by said operation recognition module, among functions of the plug-in modules installed by said plug-in setting module for processing the contents package based on the limit information for the respective plug-in modules; and

executing, by a contents processing execution module, processing of the contents package, according to the executable operative functions of the plug-in modules permitted by said plug-in function permission module.

8. (Previously Presented) A contents processing apparatus according to claim 1, further including an update device that updates the plug-in management file.

9. (New) A storage medium according to claim 7, wherein the contents management file is rewritable and is obtained independently of the contents packages corresponding thereto.

10. (New) A storage medium according to claim 7, wherein the plug-in management file is rewritable and is obtained independently of the contents packages corresponding thereto.

11. (New) A storage medium according to claim 7, wherein a contents package is inhibited from being used when there is no contents management file corresponding to the contents package, and are also inhibited from being processed when there is no plug-in management file corresponding to the contents package.

12. (New) A contents processing apparatus comprising:

a contents information storage that stores a plurality of contents packages, a contents management file for managing respective licenses for the plurality of contents packages, plug-in modules including executable operative functions for processing contents packages, and a plug-in management file for defining the executable operative functions of the plug-in modules among a plurality of functions of respective plug-in modules, wherein the contents management file includes limit information for controlling the use of the respective contents packages based on the respective licenses, and the plug-in management file includes limit information for controlling the use of the respective plug-in modules, is rewritable and is obtained independently of the contents packages corresponding thereto;

a plug-in setting device that installs plug-in modules for processing a contents package;

an operation recognition device that identifies permitted operations related to the processing of the contents package from the contents management file corresponding to the contents package;

an execution instructing device that provides an instruction for processing the contents package;

a plug-in function permission device that permits use of plug-in modules corresponding to the permitted operations identified by said operation recognition device, among functions of the plug-in modules installed by said plug-in setting device for processing the contents package based on the limit information for the respective plug-in modules; and

a contents processing execution device that processes the contents package, according to the executable operative functions of the plug-in modules permitted by said plug-in function permission device.

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